

§ 20-123. Trailers and towed vehicles.

(a) The limitations in G.S. 20-116 on combination vehicles do not prohibit the towing of farm trailers not exceeding three in number nor exceeding a total length of 50 feet during the period from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset when a red flag of at least 12 inches square is prominently displayed on the last vehicle. The towing of farm trailers and equipment allowed by this subsection does not apply to interstate or federal numbered highways.

(b) No trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle shall be operated over the highways of the State unless such trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle be firmly attached to the rear of the towing unit, and unless so equipped that it will not snake, but will travel in the path of the vehicle drawing such trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle, which equipment shall at all times be kept in good condition.

(c) In addition to the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the towed vehicle shall be attached to the towing unit by means of safety chains or cables which shall be of sufficient strength to hold the gross weight of the towed vehicle in the event the primary towing device fails or becomes disconnected while being operated on the highways of this State if the primary towing attachment is a ball hitch. Trailers and semitrailers having locking pins or bolts in the towing attachment to prevent disconnection, and the locking pins or bolts are of sufficient strength and condition to hold the gross weight of the towed vehicle, need not be equipped with safety chains or cables unless their operation is subject to the requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. Semitrailers in combinations of vehicles that are equipped with fifth wheel assemblies that include locking devices need not be equipped with safety chains or cables. (1937, c. 407, s. 86; 1955, c. 296, s. 3; 1963, c. 356, s. 2; c. 1027, s. 2; 1965, c. 966; 1971, c. 639; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1975, c. 716, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 34; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1195; 1993, c. 71, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 15; 1997-148, s. 8.)